

Current Economic Programs Printed Survey Results: by the *Consolidated Federal Funds Report Statistics Users* Respondent Base

U.S. Census Bureau
Current Economic Statistics User Survey

OMB CQM-26 (Rev.5/5/98)

I. DATA CONTENT

Your answers identifying the survey data you use will help us understand our users' patterns of data use.

1. Which Current Economic Statistics from the Census Bureau do you use? (Mark all that apply.)

(1) Monthly

0.0%;	0	None
62.7%;	32	Retail Sales
52.9%;	27	Wholesale Trade
54.9%;	28	Manufacturing/Trade Inventory/Sales
64.7%;	33	Housing Starts
88.2%;	45	Building Permits
64.7%;	33	New Home Sales
54.9%;	28	Value of New Construction Put in Place
45.1%;	23	Housing Completions
39.2%;	20	Expenditures for Residential Improvements
45.1%;	23	New Residential Construction
31.4%;	16	New Mobile Home Placements
51.0%;	26	Monthly Imports and Exports
47.1%;	24	Current Industrial Reports
47.1%;	24	Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, Orders

Replies 51; Forms 56

(2) Quarterly

62.1%;	18	Quarterly Financial Report
79.3%;	23	Current Industrial Reports
20.7%;	6	Federal Assistance Awards Data System
41.4%;	12	Quarterly Tax Survey
24.1%;	7	Quarterly Public Employee Retirement

Replies 29; Forms 56

(3) Annual

66.1%;	37	Annual Retail Trade
62.5%;	35	Annual (Wholesale) Trade
48.2%;	27	Annual Survey of Communications
57.1%;	32	Transportation Annual Survey
55.4%;	31	Service Annual Survey
87.5%;	49	County Business Patterns

60.7%;	34	ZIP Code Business Patterns
55.4%;	31	Statistics of U.S. Businesses
48.2%;	27	Characteristics of New Housing
80.4%;	45	Annual Building Permits
57.1%;	32	New Residential Construction in Selected Metropolitan Areas
44.6%;	25	Annual Capital Expenditures
78.6%;	44	Annual Survey of Manufactures
46.4%;	26	Current Industrial Reports
35.7%;	20	Research and Development Survey
41.1%;	23	Plant Capacity Utilization
33.9%;	19	Education Finance Survey
57.1%;	32	State Tax Collection Survey
30.4%;	17	Annual Public Employee Retirement
51.8%;	29	Annual Survey of Public Employment
100.0%;	56	Consolidated Federal Funds Report
80.4%;	45	State Government Finances
64.3%;	36	Annual Imports and Exports

Replies 56; Forms 56

II. DATA DELIVERY

The Census Bureau is considering use of the Internet as the primary method of data delivery. By completing the following questions, you will help us retain the most essential delivery formats and design the best possible data delivery service.

(4) 2. How do you receive current economic data now? (Mark all that apply.)

91.1%;	51	Printed Publications	17.9%;	10	Direct (E-mail) delivery
80.4%;	45	World Wide Web (Internet)	14.3%;	8	FAX
66.1%;	37	CD-ROMs	3.6%;	2	Regular mail
26.8%;	15	Diskettes	7.1%;	4	Other

Replies 56; Forms 56

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- Check values by telephone
 - also use microfiche in some cases.
 - hard copy computer run
 - Consultation w/colleagues who receive your material.
 - building permits printout
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(5) 3. What format do you PREFER when downloading data for further manipulation? (Mark all that apply.)

68.5%;	37	Spreadsheet (e.g., wkl, xls, etc...)
44.4%;	24	Database (e.g., dbf, mdb, etc...)
35.2%;	19	ASCII delimited
20.4%;	11	ASCII flat files
14.8%;	8	Do not manipulate data
11.1%;	6	Retrieve from print or screen and enter manually
1.9%;	1	Other

Replies 54; Forms 56

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- Excel
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4. What capabilities do you want on the Census Internet site? (For each line, indicate the degree of your preferences, from 5 [high] to 1 [low].)

(6) a. Direct (E-mail) delivery:

26.7%;	12	5	13.3%;	6	3	15.6%;	7	1
22.2%;	10	4	11.1%;	5	2	11.1%;	5	Don't know

Replies 45; Forms 56

(7) b. E-mail notification:

40.9%;	18	5	25.0%;	11	3	9.1%;	4	1
9.1%;	4	4	11.4%;	5	2	4.5%;	2	Don't know

Replies 44; Forms 56

(8) c. Retrieve/display to screen:

55.8%;	29	5	17.3%;	9	3	7.7%;	4	1
11.5%;	6	4	1.9%;	1	2	5.8%;	3	Don't know

Replies 52; Forms 56

(9) d. Search:

73.1%;	38	5	7.7%;	4	3	1.9%;	1	1
17.3%;	9	4	0.0%;	0	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 52; Forms 56

(10) e. Download complete data sets:

75.0%;	36	5	12.5%;	6	3	2.1%;	1	1
8.3%;	4	4	2.1%;	1	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 48; Forms 56

(11) f. Download selected data:

81.1%;	43	5	3.8%;	2	3	1.9%;	1	1
11.3%;	6	4	1.9%;	1	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 53; Forms 56

(12) g. Software help/tutorials:

34.8%;	16	5	17.4%;	8	3	13.0%;	6	1
23.9%;	11	4	6.5%;	3	2	4.3%;	2	Don't know

Replies 46; Forms 56

(13) h. Publication-quality printing:

40.8%;	20	5	22.4%;	11	3	6.1%;	3	1
22.4%;	11	4	8.2%;	4	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 49; Forms 56

(14) i. Charts and graphs:

32.0%;	16	5	28.0%;	14	3	12.0%;	6	1
20.0%;	10	4	8.0%;	4	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 50; Forms 56

(15) j. Geographic maps:

41.7%;	20	5	16.7%;	8	3	8.3%;	4	1
25.0%;	12	4	6.2%;	3	2	2.1%;	1	Don't know

Replies 48; Forms 56

(16) k. Other, please specify:

100.0%;	2	electronic bulletin board	0.0%;	0	Other
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Replies 2; Forms 56

• [none]

(17) l. Electronic Bulletin Board (To collect write-ins)

0.0%;	0	5	0.0%;	0	3	0.0%;	0	1
0.0%;	0	4	0.0%;	0	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 0; Forms 56

III. DATA USAGE

Your answers describing how you use the data will help us design the most effective Current Economic Statistics retrieval tool.

(18) 5. Do you combine/compare/merge data from more than one source listed in Question 1?

25.9%;	14	No	74.1%;	40	Yes
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Replies 54; Forms 56

(19) 6. What time periods do you consider when using these data? (Mark X all that apply.)

75.9%;	41	5+ years	51.9%;	28	trends up to 1 year
68.5%;	37	trends up to 5 years	0.0%;	0	Other
55.6%;	30	latest 1 or 2 periods			

Replies 54; Forms 56

(20) 7. How do you use the data? (Mark all that apply.)

58.5%;	31	Create value-added products/services
54.7%;	29	Perform patron/client inquiries
30.2%;	16	Republish in newspaper/journal
22.6%;	12	Store reports/printouts for archival purposes
15.1%;	8	Inform investment decisions
11.3%;	6	Inform marketing decisions
3.8%;	2	Locate new sites
0.0%;	0	Other

Replies 53; Forms 56

- [none]
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(21) 8. What explanatory information do you consult when using these data? (Mark all that apply.)

90.2%;	46	Definition of terms
70.6%;	36	Narrative text describing survey results
68.6%;	35	Sampling and estimation methodology
51.0%;	26	Survey design
3.9%;	2	None
3.9%;	2	Other

Replies 51; Forms 56

- Comparisons to earlier surveys and/or similar data from other agencies--e.g. census to BEA in one estimates.
 - Source of data
-

(22) 9. Do you have any pressing data or information needs that are not currently being met?

- More local info. (PMSA at least)
 - Information on nonresidential construction.
 - MCD Business Patterns, Massachusetts is doing away with county government, MCD income estimates.
 - The availability of Residential and Commercial Building Permit Data.
 - No.
 - YES! Bring back non-residential state/local permits authorized! This was a severe loss for interpreting local economic trends. Also, more geographic detail, more frequently.
 - Would like to have detailed Boiling permit data on line. Would really like to know which census tracts correspond to zip codes (and counties).
 - Household Expenditure Data at State Level.
 - Would like "New Mobile Home Replacement Report"
 - Would like Government Finance series in print form.
 - Place and regional economic data sets in relation to population/race trends.
 - We would like to see more timely Congressional district data than the decennial. Also, on your Web site, we would like better instructions for downloading files.
 - Current local (county) data on any of the following: retail sales.
 - small area data
 - sub-national retail trade
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IV. INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION ISSUES

We will soon begin restructuring the Current Economic Surveys based on the new North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Your answers will help us ensure that these surveys continue to provide the economic information needed by markets, policy makers, and business people. For more information on NAICS, see the Bureau's web site: <http://www.census.gov/NAICS>.

(24) 10. At what levels of detail do you MOST FREQUENTLY USE industry data classified by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)? (Mark all that apply.)

73.1%;	38	4-digit industries (or maximum detail I can get)
67.3%;	35	Sector totals (SIC division); e.g., Manufacturing or Retail Trade
61.5%;	32	2-digit major groups
50.0%;	26	3-digit industry groups
1.9%;	1	NA (don't use SIC-based data)
1.9%;	1	Other

Replies 52; Forms 56

- NAICS will make sector totals useful.

(25) 11. Were you aware that the SIC system is being replaced by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)?

15.1%;	8	I was unaware of this
20.8%;	11	I am partially aware, but lack details
64.2%;	34	I am aware and understand some implications

Replies 53; Forms 56

12. Would you like to receive more information about NAICS?

(26) Yes, please send me - (Mark all that apply)

100.0%;	26	A brochure that explains NAICS	30.8%;	8	Conference announcements
73.1%;	19	NAICS implementation plans	0.0%;	0	Other

Replies 26; Forms 56

- [none]

(27) No Thanks -

70.4%;	19	I will check the Census Bureau's web site (www.census.gov/naics)
29.6%;	8	I don't need more information about NAICS

Replies 27; Forms 56

V. USER PROFILE

Please tell us about yourself so we may serve you better.

(28) 13. Type of organization.

34.5%;	19	Government	1.8%;	1	Individual
34.5%;	19	Academic/Research	1.8%;	1	Association
18.2%;	10	Business	1.8%;	1	Library
5.5%;	3	Media	1.8%;	1	Other

Replies 55; Forms 56

- Library (University)
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(29) 14. Do you work in your organization's library?

41.8%;	23	Yes	58.2%;	32	No
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Replies 55; Forms 56

(30) 15. What is your affiliation with the Census Bureau?

39.6%;	21	None	3.8%;	2	Census Information Center
34.0%;	18	State Data Center	18.9%;	10	Other
3.8%;	2	Business/Industry Data Center			

Replies 53; Forms 56

- SDC Affiliate
 - Richmond Public Library, BST Dept. 101 E. Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23219
 - State Data Center Affiliate
 - Cooperator in disseminating permits authorized data
 - Depository
 - Affiliate Data Center
 - Congress
 - GPO Depository
 - Affiliate
 - Federal Depository Library
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(35) 20. May we contact you to follow up on this questionnaire?

86.5%;	45	Yes	13.5%;	7	No
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Replies 52; Forms 56

(36) Question 21. Remarks:

- A published paper version should always be made available for purchase to the public. Information being available on the internet is nice, yet it is a completely different animal than having a hard copy version of the information. An example: I can receive my new off the internet, but I still prefer to get my newspaper in the morning for reading at my leisure away from a computer.
- Census bureau data is always helpful--the data you provide enhances our publication and enables readers to make informal business decisions.
- We serve a varied clientele (academic, business, government, and private citizens) and work across many subject. Census data are absolutely vital to us. Our biggest need is for more geographic area detail more frequently (state, county, place, if possible). Users often do not understand the 5 yr. gaps and lag time for the major Economic Surveys that offer such detail, much less the 10 yr. decennial cycle. The internet is a great help in speeding "publication", but we find access is not yet universal. We still download and print entire documents for guide reference and historical purposes. I am concerned about just how long the electronic medi will remain accurate and usable as technology changes. How will the Bureau deal with these problems?
- Census has done a terrific job by putting so much material on the Web. kepp up the good work.
- I supervise human service planning in the statewide planning agency. Mark Brown, who is a planner that I supervise, will replace Paul Egan as director of the State Data Center next June (June 1998). We use census data regularly in the preparation of studies and reports.

- We are especially interested in state housing permit data.
- I received the survey on August 7th-so was not able to return it in the time requested!

Our office is very interested in any information on the implementation of NAICS-as our researchers will be using it a great deal.

- We analyze the local situation, and compare it with national and regional trends. National and regional data have little value if there is no NYC equivalent (i.e. monthly retail trade).

NY area PMSA's are a joke. Stop suppressing to CMSA due to secondary suppression. Surpass the 2nd largest PMSA instead. The CMSA is the metro area.

- We look forward to working with you on the upcoming Census.
- The Web site is great, but it is sometimes difficult to quickly find the information I'm seeking. Also, I am mystified by your downloading parameters. Things should be in dbf format, which is more universally accessible to database managers than mdb.
- Census is always quick and dependable. Great job!
- My colleagues and I use your printed and electronic resources regularly, for a variety of economic and population requests. We find your resources to be user-friendly.

We have a few suggestions listed in question 9.

I have always found your data user staff members who answer the phone to be helpful and responsive to our rush requests.

- We love the Census Bureau! Clear publications indices and ease of search engines on the Internet site are very important to us. Also, choice of how to download data is good, not all users need or can use spreadsheet software.
- Will all Census data be available only via the Internet? My customers prefer printed format. Thank you.
- I appreciate the value of your service! Educators use information for social profit.

Figure 1: